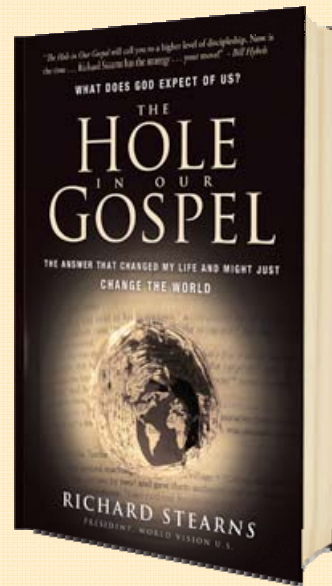


THE ALDERSGATE EXPERIENCE

4th Quarter 2011
Volume 35, No. 4

December 2011
USPS 357-230



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The Aldersgate Experience

The Aldersgate Experience is published quarterly in March, June, September, and December.

The submission date is February 15 for the 2012 First Quarter/March issue. Please send information to: aldersgatenews@aldersgate.net



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Advent Sermon Series: The Christmas Creed

Originally in the ancient Church what we call Christmas was actually called the 'Feast of the Incarnation.' Christmas is not simply a time when we celebrate Jesus' birthday. Christmas is a time when we profess some of the most mysterious and transformative beliefs of the Christian faith: the virgin birth, the pre-existence of Christ, and the incarnation.

During the Advent sermon series, we will explore what the Church means when it confesses in the Nicene Creed that Jesus was born of a virgin, that Jesus is older than creation and that Mary's son is God in the flesh, fully God and fully human.

November 26 & 27 'Begotten of the Father'
December 3 & 4 'By Whom All Things Are Made'
December 10 & 11 'For Us and Our Salvation'

Advent Taize-inspired Worship Service on December 4

Celebrate the Incarnation with worship on Sunday, December 4, inspired by the monastic community at Taize, France.

Taize worship brings together Christian prayer traditions from all over the world and allows for a calming, personal encounter with God.

Join us at 5 p.m. for a simple meal of soup and bread in the Guback Center followed by worship at 6 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Services

3, 5, 7, 9, & 11 p.m.

Childcare available at 3, 5, & 7

Christmas Day

Sunday, December 25

One worship service at 10:30 a.m.

No childcare or Sunday School

The church will be closed December 26 - 30

Back to usual worship schedule with childcare

Saturday, December 31

Worship service at 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 1

Worship Services

8:30, 9:45, & 11:15 a.m.

No Sunday School or Evening Student Activities

Gifts in the Name of Jesus Christ

By Tom Miller

Just as the Magi honored Jesus with their gifts at his birth, we too can honor Him by giving to those in need in our local community and around the world.

Each year, Aldersgate United Methodist Church members participate in "Alternative Giving" at Christmas time. Because of our alternative gifts during 2010, church members were able to build nearly 25 stoves in Guatemala; purchase sewing machines for AMA in Xela, Guatemala; and, buy nearly three tons of rice and several cows, as well as support efforts that help others in their quest to climb from poverty in Cambodia. We also provided support to missions work along the Route One Corridor.

Thank you so very much for sharing your blessings and gifts with those who Christ has taught us are our Neighbors. During Advent, starting with our worship services on November 26 & 27 and going through December 18, 2011, the Risk-Taking Mission and Service Council will again conduct Aldersgate's "Alternative Giving" project.

As you consider your gift giving during the coming Christmas season, please take advantage of this opportunity to purchase gifts to honor your friends, family, colleagues – your Neighbors. In doing so, you will know that you have helped those who are touched by our missions and service efforts to go beyond the factors that affect their health and limit their ability to support themselves and their families.

This year, your Alternative Giving can help our Neighbors in:

- a) the White Mountain Apache Tribe of Arizona - develop opportunities for their youth;
- b) Guatemala – provide the materials for cooking stoves that will be built by our Mission Teams;



c) Cambodia – provide rice, vegetable plots and seeds, cows and chickens, water filters, medical care, sewing and weaving classes for those served by our Missionaries in Cambodia and to support orphans; and

d) the local area – support both the Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church and the Route One Community Kitchen locally.

The Risk-Taking Mission and Service Council looks forward to seeing you after each church service during Advent to continue the Christmas miracle that makes the difference between life and death for those we serve.



Ft. Apache Update: Eileen Hill will visit Aldersgate on December 4. She is Highland Support Project's point of contact with the White Mountain Apache in Arizona. In support of next summer's mission trip to Ft Apache, she is responsible for facilitating programming, organizing staff and families, and guiding HSP's Service Learning teams. If you are interested in learning more about our Ft Apache mission, please make plans to attend any of the Sunday morning services on December 4th!

New Congregational Care Coordinator on Staff

By Leah Matthews



Aldersgate is pleased to have Julie Pfister on board as Congregational Care Coordinator. In this position, Julie serves as the point of contact for information regarding parishioners' prayer requests, pending hospitalizations and other urgent concerns.

Julie is also responsible for notifying the pastors of pastoral emergencies, working with the pastors to insure hospitalized parishioners are visited in a timely manner, and sharing with the pastors 1-2 days of the hospital visitation schedule per week. She also coordinates the CHEER Team, a lay ministry of 50 volunteers that provides weekly care to church members in hospitals and nursing homes.

Julie has a long history of volunteer service at Aldersgate and the surrounding community that includes serving as PTA President at Stratford Landing Elementary School, volunteering for the Coalition for Pulmonary Fibrosis and the Route One Community Kitchen (ROCK) as well as serving as Aldersgate's Hospitality Council chair, receptions coordinator for the Bereavement Committee, and president of United Methodist Women.

Julie describes herself as having a heart to serve our church, especially those in need of comfort and support. Julie can be reached at 703-765-6555, ext. 605 or j.pfister@aldersgate.net.

Help Make Journey to Bethlehem a Wonderful Gift to Our Community

Volunteers are always encouraged to help out with Journey to Bethlehem! Please take a look at available "jobs" where you can assist behind the scenes or to "act" as a part of the story – even non-speaking townspeople in costume help set the scene for this wonderful event. You can volunteer at www.aldersgate.net or by contacting Bill Austin at LBSHOP@cox.net, 703-767-9761, or Andrew DiAntonio at adiantonio@aldersgate.net, 703-765-6555, ext. 606. Everyone in the family can get involved!

Journey to Bethlehem

Sunday & Monday, Dec. 11 & 12



Bring your friends and neighbors!
Continuous Tours 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Making a Joyful Noise for Christmas

By Amy Hurd

The congregation will have several opportunities to hear special Christmas music at Aldersgate this December. The church is blessed to have talented ringers, singers, and bands under the direction of our outstanding music staff.

The handbell choirs, under the direction of Deborah Jones, will be supporting the 8:30 and 11:15 services on December 4. The Wesleyan Ringers will be at both services and the children's Faith Ringers will be joining them at the 11:15 service for some very special Christmas music.

Wesleyan Ringers will ring an arrangement of "Now Tell Us, Gentle Mary" to call us to worship. They will ring "Travelers from Nazareth" and Kate Schneider, one of our very talented youth, will be singing with them. The ringers will also offer an arrangement of "In the Bleak Midwinter." The children will be ringing "The Piper's Lullaby" and will feature two ringers on chimes.



The Children's Christmas musical will be performed at 9:45 and 11:15 services on December 11 under the direction of Karli Eddinger. The children involved with this program range from preschool to 6th grade.

The Christmas program: "Come Ye Faithful: A Service of Carols" by Hal Hopson will be presented on Sunday, December 18, by Aldersgate's combined adult choirs under the direction of Jason Gottshall. Unlike recent years, when the concert was on a Friday or Saturday, this year it will be at both the 8:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Sunday worship services. The choir will be accompanied by strings, flute, harp, handbells, percussion, and organ.

That same weekend, music written by Andreas Barrett especially for this special musical weekend will be performed by the bands and singers at both the Saturday service and at the Journeys service on Sunday at 9:45 a.m. Jason Gottshall, members of the traditional choirs, and handbells will be included in these services as well.

Aldersgate is fortunate that Andreas' duties have shifted this year to allow him more time to compose music and to



collaborate with the rest of the musical staff for events like this. He is now writing music for the church as requested largely by the pastors. On a regular basis, he is re-arranging traditional hymns for use in a more blended setting and has written new versions of liturgical components such as the Nicene Creed. Andreas is writing music for special events such as last year's Holy Thursday and this musical weekend in December.

The music staff has begun looking for more opportunities to collaborate. While Andreas' music is featured primarily on Saturday evenings and at journeys on Sundays, he and Jason Gottshall talk occasionally about creating more opportunities for their groups to merge.

The adult choirs and musical groups are open to everyone. While the music is sometimes challenging, rehearsals are fun and the groups are supportive. Anyone who enjoys singing or playing an instrument is encouraged to come to a rehearsal. Schedules are available on the church website. Serving the church by making a joyful noise is something that can be quite satisfying and enjoyable!



Aldersgate Awards Nine Scholarships for the 2011-2012 Academic Year

By Lew Ashley

The Aldersgate Permanent Endowment Committee has awarded a total of nine scholarships for the 2011-2012 school year. This is the largest number of scholarships ever awarded in a single school year by Aldersgate.

The criteria used for selection were: academic achievement, financial need, participation in Aldersgate activities, and participation in community activities. Six of the scholarships were for college students and three for seminary students.

Scholarships were awarded to the following members of Aldersgate who are pursuing college degrees: Ben Aleixo, Margaret Amos, Sam Jackson, Kaitlyn Kincannon, Amanda Smith and Chad Werner; and seminary scholarships to Teer Hardy and Taylor Mertins. Funds for one additional seminary student were available and, in the absence of any additional applicants, were provided to Wesley Theological Seminary for a student to be selected by the Seminary.

The scholarships were for \$1,500 each except for Margaret Amos who was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship for pursuit of studies in music.

Altogether the Committee received 22 applications and interviews were offered to each applicant. One application was withdrawn and two were filed late and not considered; thus, the winners were drawn from a total of 19 applicants.

Information on prospective Aldersgate scholarships for the academic year 2012-2013 will be published via weekly church bulletins and emails and in the next Aldersgate Experience in early March 2012.

Members of Aldersgate are invited and encouraged to contribute funds for the establishment of a new endowment fund or to contribute to an existing Aldersgate endowment fund for the purpose of assisting Aldersgate members in pursuing higher education (college or seminary degrees). Interested Aldersgate members may contact the church office or Roger Amole, Committee Chairman, at rlamole@comcast.net for additional information.

Tax Reminder: December 31 is the deadline for 2011 financial contributions to the church. One time as well as ongoing donations may be made online at www.aldersgate.net/onlinegiving.

2012 Church Wide Study and Sermon Series

By Jason Micheli

After twenty-five years as a wealthy business executive and CEO of Lenox, Richard Stearns received the invitation to become the President of World Vision, the world's largest Christian service and relief agency.

Accepting the position required Stearns to sell his dream house, dream car and accept a drastic change in salary and lifestyle, a sacrifice Stearns likened to Jesus' challenge to the rich man to follow him not just out of convenience but with his whole life. God, he discovered, wanted more from him than just his belief. Up until the moment the invitation came, he'd been living, he realized, with a hole in his understanding of the Gospel.

In *The Hole in Our Gospel*, the 2010 Christian Book of the Year, Stearns chronicles his personal journey from corporate CEO to advocate for the world's poor and oppressed.

Last winter Dennis and Jason preached a brief three week sermon series inspired by the book *The Hole in Our Gospel*.

Hunger Awareness Banquet & Program

In tandem with the church wide study, the youth will be participating in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine – a nationwide event in which youth will voluntarily participate in a 30 hour fast to show solidarity and raise awareness of global food crises.

The youth will be fasting from Saturday the 21st of January to the 22nd. At the close of our fast, the youth will be holding an Awareness Banquet, a dinner and study aimed at teaching about the complex issues related to hunger and the ways to address them.

Please join us Sunday night, January 22, at 5 p.m. in the church for this event.

- Andrew D.

THE HOLE IN OUR GOSPEL

SIX-WEEK QUEST

The feedback from the series was so positive as was the desire to go deeper that *The Hole in Our Gospel* will be the theme for Aldersgate's 2012 Church Wide Study.

Members of the church and the community will be invited to join a small group in which they can read Stearns' book, experience a DVD lesson based on the book and discuss what Stearns' challenge means for each of us in our lives.

The Hole in Our Gospel is a powerful first-person story of how Stearns wrestled with what it means to obey and follow God, whatever the cost, and by telling his own story Stearns issues a powerful challenge to all Christians to change the world by actively living out their faith.

Believing that the Gospel is "more than a private transaction between you and God," Stearns digs into the original message of Jesus to answer the question: What does God expect of us? "Two thousand years ago twelve people changed the world," Stearns says, "imagine a world in which two billion Christians embrace the whole Gospel."

Sermon Themes for the Study:

January 14 & 15: Where is the Hole?

January 21 & 22: Finding the Hole in Me

January 28 & 29: What's Wrong with this Picture?

February 4 & 5: Putting the American Dream to Death

February 11 & 12: Uncovering the Hole in the Church

February 18 & 19: Repairing the Hole in the World

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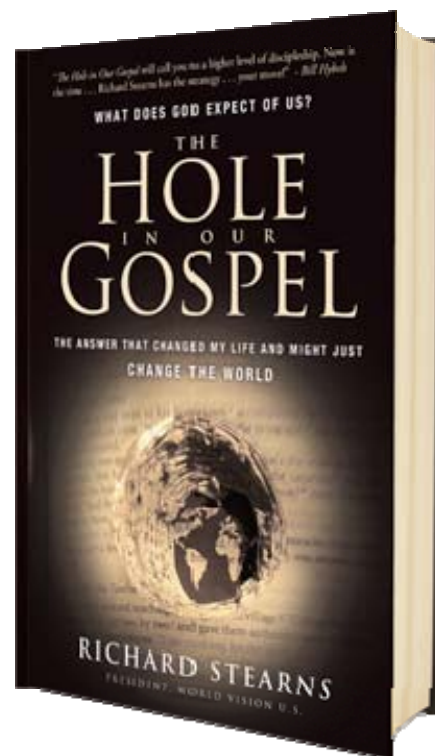
ary, into Sunday
ng a Hunger
ng congregations
s they can help.
Guback Center

DiAntonio

Buy your copy of the book
and find a small group to join for this study!

Group sign ups and book sales will begin during
December coffee hours and online at
www.aldersgate.net.

If you would like to host or facilitate a small group
for this study, please contact Jason Micheli at
j.micheli@aldersgate.net.



Celebrating the History of Aldersgate Church with Founding Members Jack Shawn, John Shipman and Doris Schultz

By Shirley Pitts



This October, Aldersgate had its 55th anniversary. These three members of our church played an important role in the founding of Aldersgate which had its first service in the cafeteria of Hollin Hall Elementary School on August 12, 1956. The minister's scripture was Matthew 5:13-16.

Doris Schultz, Jack Shawn, and John Shipman were asked: Why would you want to go to a church that was meeting in an elementary school? Jack said he and his wife were Presbyterians but after the new minister, Gene Thompson, came to their house and was so enthusiastic, they decided to try it. John was a Baptist and his wife attended a Christian Church. He said his wife was so "overtaken" by Gene that they were eager to go to the same church.

Doris and her husband, Ruby, were Methodists but they had seen an ad in the paper inviting people to come to the new little church. So, they were eager to see what it was like.

Hollin Hall School didn't allow the church to have meetings in their rooms (except the cafeteria) so the children met with their Sunday School classes in the halls. Ruby Schultz made the children little stools, which he painted red, for their seats. If any babies were crying in the nursery, he would walk around comforting them until they were calm. Doris Schultz said that the preacher's little 3-year-old boy was quite "active" so she would sit by him every Sunday and would bring a little train and a book. The little lad was kept busy playing with the train for some of the time. Doris still has the same little train. John Shipman said he enjoyed teaching the children. Jack Shawn was a "Block Chairman." It was his job to look for moving vans. When he saw a new family moving in, he invited them to church.

Jack said that after a few months people started joining the church. There were 35 in the first group and seven the next week. All the committee meetings and other church related events were held in people's homes like the early Christians since the school didn't permit them to have any night meetings. They slowly began to have all the organizations much as we have now. The first ladies' group was called Women's Society of Christian Service which is now United Methodist Women.

In 1957 a church site committee was formed to look into a suitable place to build the church. The 3.7 acre Collingwood location was recommended and purchased in 1958. The first sanctuary was located in Founders Hall. After many years, our sanctuary was built.

We appreciate the people who had the courage to take a chance on a new church and the ones who continue to make the church what it is today.

Help for Moving Mondloch Families

By **Hannah Lau** (a freshman at West Potomac High School)

When I heard that Mondloch House was closing and that families were being moved from a group-home setting to apartments, I thought maybe there was a way I could help. I talked with Martha Faconer, the chef at Aldersgate, who also works at Mondloch House.

Martha told me that all of the families were in great need of many things but especially items for the kitchen like pots and pans, dishes, cups, silverware, etc. I was able to gather a lot of kitchen items from my grandmother, who had just moved to a smaller apartment, and from my mom's friend who was cleaning out her mother's house.



Hannah Lau unloading items at Mondloch House.

But I needed a lot more, so I had a table during Sunday coffee hours to collect more items and monetary donations. In the end, I completely filled my mother's van with the collected kitchen items to be delivered to Mondloch families. Members generously donated enough cash that I was able to buy 13 microwaves as well.

Thank you to all who helped me with this project: my parents, Martha Faconer, Paul Amos, and the members of Aldersgate.

The Season for Giving is all year for Christians, so please sign up to deliver produce for Mondloch families as well as homeless adults.

By **Patricia Millett**

For 2012, Aldersgate has committed to providing fresh produce to support food baskets made for the children and families that used to live at Mondloch House and are now in supported housing. In addition, our donations will support homeless adults at Mondloch 1 and the Eleanor Kennedy Shelter.

WE NOW NEED VOLUNTEERS FOR ALL OF 2012 to purchase and deliver the produce.

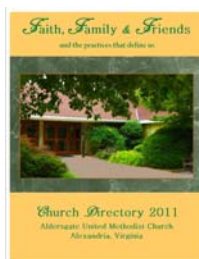
Please visit the 2012 sign-up calendar on the Mondloch podium in the church foyer, and please prayerfully consider donating a small amount of your time and \$35 on a week or weeks of your choosing to help take care of our hungry neighbors.

It is a flexible and easy way to volunteer and, if you like, to involve your children in serving their community. You just choose the date(s) that work for you.

When the designated week arrives, you will be contacted with a list of produce needed, which you purchase at a time and place of convenience to you and then deliver to Mondloch House 1, 3510 Lockheed Blvd. , which is right near Huntley Meadows Park.

Questions? Please contact me at 703-799-5814 or kingmillett@verizon.net.

And a million thanks to all of you who have volunteered and made this ministry work in 2011. You have shown the face of Christ to our neighbors in need!



Aldersgate 2011 Pictorial Directories will be distributed in mid-December!

If you had your portrait made for the directory, you receive one free directory. We ordered some extras for new members and to fulfill requests by members as well. Please contact Amy Hurd if you were not photographed, but would like a directory. A huge thank you to our volunteer directory team: Jane Gandee, Meghan Lau, and Diane Bechtol (who also designed the book).

“Not Too Far From Here” Fund Becomes a Blessing to the Community

By Jay Steadman

In late 2009, a generous member – an extravagantly generous member – created a \$300,000 charitable endowment fund to help those in need in our immediate vicinity, specifically within 25 miles of our church. Despite being in one of the wealthiest municipalities in the nation, many of our neighbors, especially along the Route 1 corridor, are in dire need during this difficult economic period. There are many programs and agencies available to help individuals who have fallen on hard times, but sometimes these organizations just don't have the resources available, flexibility or responsiveness to help in every situation. This is where the Not Too Far From Here (NTFFH) Fund has become a unique resource helping those most in need and intervening when all other resources and services have been exhausted. The Aldersgate Endowment Committee that administers the fund looks for those hard cases where someone has "fallen through the cracks" and may have nowhere else to turn. Over the past year we have made a difference in the lives of a growing number of people in need, right here in our own "backyard."

So, you may wonder, what has this fund accomplished? To date this extravagantly generous blessing has provided over \$36,000 in direct funds to help over twelve families and sixteen individuals. Those we have helped mirror the diversity of our community; they've been our neighbors, members of our church and Rising Hope Mission Church, and referred to us from New Hope Housing and other charitable organizations. The NTFFH Fund has helped to pay rent and security deposits. We even covered moving expenses in one case. Since our livelihoods are so intertwined with our ability to drive, the fund has paid for numerous car related expenses, to include car loan payments, vehicle repairs, car insurance, driver's license fees and to assist in paying off old tickets or fines to help someone obtain their commercial driver's license and thereby get a job. Many of these cases involve areas of need where most agencies and programs are unable to provide assistance. And finally, the fund helped a homeless man replace the children's glasses he was wearing, though painfully too small for him, that he received via another charitable program.

As our Savior has shown us, we know our neighbors need our prayers, our presence, our services and our gifts. So, if you know someone who is 'down to their last dime' or 'running out of time,' someone who has 'nowhere else to go' or 'needs a little hope,' please let us know.

We have a NTFFH "suggestion" box in the church lobby, an e-mail account ntffhf@gmail.com or you may contact

one of the pastors, if you know of someone in need not too far from here. In the requests we appreciate as much information as possible on what the need is for, why other services aren't available or what caused the hardship that is proving so difficult to overcome.

NOT TOO FAR FROM HERE

Words & Music by Ty Lacy and Steve Siler

Somebody's down to their last dime;
Somebody's running out of time
Not too far from here
Somebody's got nowhere else to go;
Somebody needs a little hope
Not too far from here
and I may not know their names,
but I'm praying just the same
That you'll use me Lord to wipe away a tear;
'Cause somebody's crying

Not too far from here

Somebody's troubled and confused;
Somebody's got nothing left to lose
Not too far from here
Somebody's forgotten how to trust;
Somebody's dying for love
Not too far from here
It may be a stranger's face,
but I'm praying for your grace
To move in me and take away the fear;
'Cause somebody's hurting

Not too far from here

Help me Lord not to turn away from pain;
help me not to rest while those around me weep;
Give me your strength and compassion, when
somebody finds the road of life too steep

Now I'm letting down my guard
and I'm opening my heart
Help me speak your love to every needful ear
Someone is waiting

Not too far from here

Someone is waiting

Not too far from here



Carols, Cookies, and Christmas Decorations

Thank you to those who came out to decorate the church for Christmas. A fun time was had by all!





Aldersgate Church

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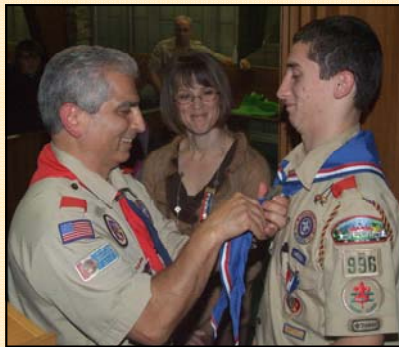
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Aldersgate Experience USPS 357-230 is published quarterly at
Aldersgate UMC, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308-1699

Postmaster: Send address changes to Aldersgate UMC,
1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308-1699.

PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT ALEXANDRIA, VA

TIME CRITICAL MATERIAL



On October 22, 2011, Boy Scout Troop 996 celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a reunion, dinner, awards, and Eagle Scout Court of Honor for the troop's 105th Eagle, Vincent Accardi, son of the scoutmaster.